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Songs and Rhymes

ENGLISH AND FRENCH

BY

Walter Herries Pollock

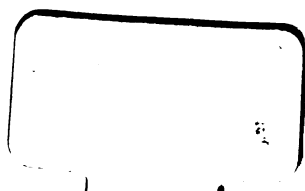


London:
REMINGTON & CO.

1882.



600087182W





SONGS AND RHYMES

By the same Author.

"THE POET AND THE MUSE," from the French of Alfred
de Musset.

(Bentley & Son.)

SONGS AND RHYMES:

ENGLISH AND FRENCH.

BY

WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK

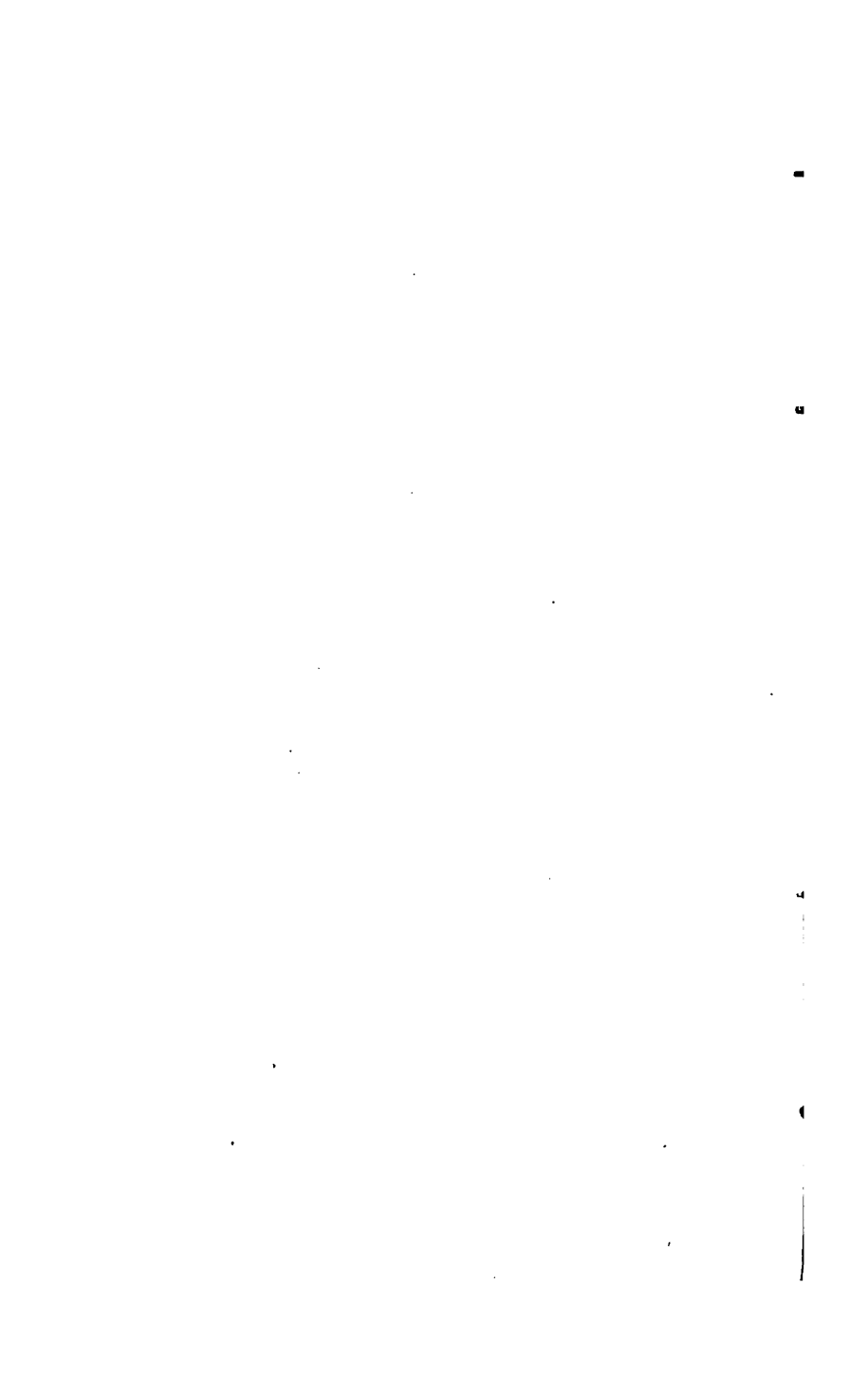


LONDON:
REMINGTON & CO.,

134 NEW BOND STREET.

1882.

280. o. 865.



Τέττιγξ μὲν τέττιγι φίλος, μύρμακι δὲ μύρμαξ,
ἴρῃκες δ' ἴρῃξιν, ἐμὴν δὲ τε μοῖσα καὶ φῶδά.

Oh Rhymer, skilled on either string,
In either tongue, to strike and sing,
Why ask of me an idle thing,

A rhyme before your *Rhymes* to set?
For *good wine needs no bush* ; nor these
Demand my praise to make them please,
More than the grey anemones

From fragrant April gardens wet.
Your singing verse delights my dream ;
But, bid me scribble, and I seem
The huckster hoarse that o'er the stream

Of traffic, howls, *Fresh Flowers to-day* !
The crowd must praise the flowers ; must come
To buy them, but they wish him dumb,
The man who cracks your tympanum

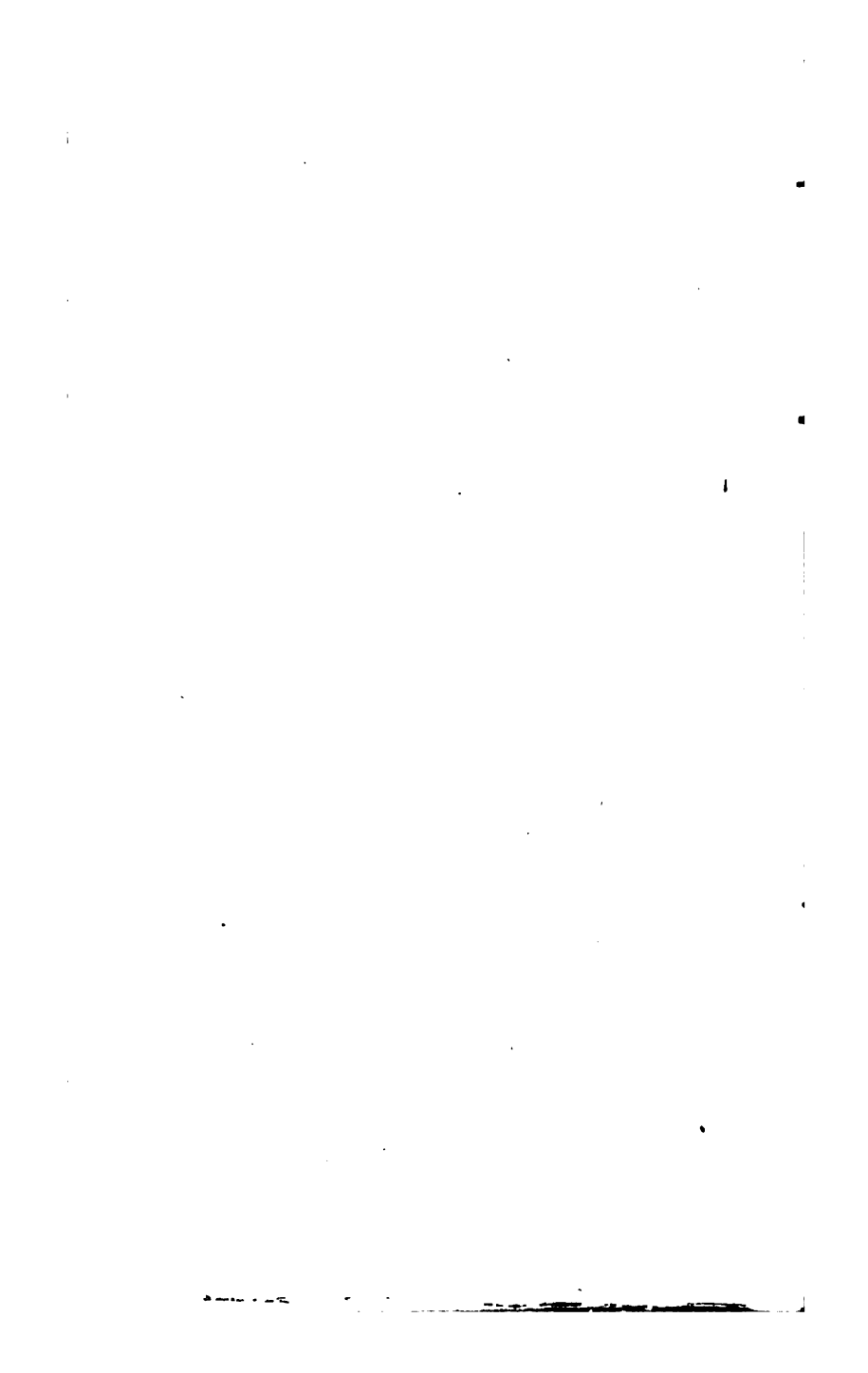
With shouting what he need not say.
The crowd in London's dust and grime
Must crave the buds of summer time,
But he who shouts, and I who rhyme,

Might almost scare the crowd away !
Nay, if that merchant only knew
His art, he'd let the scented dew,
The country fragrance wafted through

The street, bring custom to his stall :
And I, more wise than he, will let
The blossoms in your garden set,
Pansy, and rue, and violet,
Speak for themselves to one and all.

A. L.

TO MY WIFE.



ENGLISH RHYMES.



SONGS AND RHYMES.



"COME."

COME to me when the earth is fair
With all the freshness of the spring,
When life fills all the liquid air,
And when the woods with music ring ;
When all the wakening flowers rejoice,
And birds remind me of your voice.

TO MY WIFE.



ENGLISH RHYMES.

And still their ceaseless chirrup ring
Two weary words, "No hope—no hope."

O fond white arms that loved to play
About my neck and soothe my pain,
Will there be never more a day
For me to know your touch again ?

O soft low voice that loved to tell
Sweet tales to my enraptured ears !
O voice that answered mine so well,
In laughter and in loving tears !

O love, my lost, my only love,
Who make the barren years so slow,

I see you in the skies above,
And in the whirling stream below

Where all the ripples sound and swell
With all the words you spoke to me,
Till life once more runs smooth and well,
While I am fooled by memory.

Come back, O love, to speak one word,
One little word before I die,
One of the many I have heard
And always hear in memory.

It cannot be. The visions wane
And pale before reality ;

The world is cold and bare again—
There is no joy in memory.

Yet could I only this believe,
That some day in the heaven they dream
We two should meet, I'd cease to grieve,
And heavy time would lighter seem.

Nought see I but this wretched world,
A shore whereon the fierce wind drives
Weird wrecks upon the shingle hurled,
The jetsam of divided lives.

What hard and weary punishment
The awful fates contrive for men :

They will not let me give, content,
All days of now for one of then

Ah no ! Where'er I pass my years,
That darken on the deathward slope,
Those words will echo in mine ears,
Those weary words, " No hope—no hope ! "

II.

STILL cradled on the waters clear
The mirror of the dropping sun,
I slowly float, and strangely dear
Appear the days that now are done.

The sunset breezes lightly kiss
The tree-tops with their last low breath :
And there is happiness in this,
The happiness that comes with death.

They tower in the waning light
Those shadowy trees that stud the dell,
And through the softly opening night
Peals far away the evening bell.

The birds have hushed their noise above,
All through the day they sang their best ;
They interchange last notes of love,
And sink with all the world to rest.

A strange and sweetly solemn mirth
Is waiting on the dying day ;
Peace holds secure upon the earth
And in my weary heart her sway.

As like a worn-out child I lie,
To slumber rocked on Nature's breast,
The slow night-wind comes sighing by
With faintly whispered words of rest.

HEIDELBERG—ON THE TERRACE.

WE stood upon the castle's height,
So full of old romances ;
The moon above shone clear and bright,
And silvered all our fancies.

The Neckar murmured in its flow,
The woods with dew were weeping ;

HEIDELBERG—ON THE TERRACE. 21

And lighting up the depths below,
The quiet town seemed sleeping.

The battlements stood grim and still
In majesty before us,
And floating faintly up the hill
We heard a students' chorus.

Inspired by the brimming cup,
Their words were wildly ringing ;
They sang of love, and I took up
The burden of their singing.

I spoke to you—in sweet surprise
A little while you hovered,

22 *HEIDELBERG—ON THE TERRACE.*

Then in the depths of those grey eyes
Your answer I discovered.

We vowed that while the Neckar's flow
—How low the words were spoken!—
Ran undisturbed these towers below,
Our troth should rest unbroken.

Again beneath these walls I stand,
And here my footsteps linger,
Where once I pressed with loving hand
This token on your finger.

But now the well-loved view I see,
Its old enchantment misses,

HEIDELBERG—ON THE TERRACE. 23

The evening breeze sighs back to me

The shadows of our kisses.

Unwearied still the Neckar flows

In the soft summer weather,

But last year's leaves and last year's vows

Have flown away together.

RAINDROPS.

WHEN thunderclouds hang black in May,
Cool drops refresh the weary day :
To man, in childhood's short-lived grief,
Fast-flowing tears bring sweet relief.

The clouds that come in winter's train
Drop snow instead of tender rain,

RAINDROPS.

25

And duller grief can find no tears
To melt the ice of older years.

BELOW THE HEIGHTS.

I SAT at Berne, and watched the chain
Of icy peaks and passes,
That towered like gods above the plain,
In stern majestic masses ;

I waited till the evening light
Upon their heads descended ;

They caught it on their glittering height,
And held it there suspended :

I saw the red spread o'er the white,
Just like a maiden's blushing,
Till all were bathed in rosy light,
That seemed from heaven rushing :

The dead white snow was flushed with life,
As if some huge Pygmalion
Had sought to find himself a wife,
In stones that saw Deucalion.

Too soon the light began to wane,
Though lingering soft and tender,

And the snow-giants sank again
Into their calm dead splendour.

And as I watched the last faint glow,
I turned as pale as they did,
And sighed to think that on the snow
The rose so quickly faded.

AT HER FEET.

WHAT is this I play ?

“ Surely she is fair ? ”

Can I help it, pray,

If my fingers stray

To that same old air ?

Yet you loved it once,

As we fancied, dearly :

For my sake, you told me.

Neither then could guess
That so soon you'd hold me
For a new toy merely.
Listen once again
To the music's moans—
Try to feel these pleading,
Passionate semitones !
Could my voice but ring
With some strain to move you,
Ah me ! I can sing
Only this—I love you.

FATHER FRANCIS.

“ I come your sin-rid souls to shrive,
Is this the way wherein ye live ? ”

We lightly think of virtue,
Enjoyment cannot hurt you.

“ Ye love. Hear then of chivalry.
Of gallant truth and constancy.”

We find new loves the meetest,
And stolen kisses sweetest.

“Voices ye have, then should ye sing
In praise of heaven’s mighty king.”

We deem it is our duty
To chant our darlings’ beauty.

“Strait are the gates of worldly pleasure,
The joy beyond no soul can measure.”

Alas ! we are but mortal,
And much prefer the portal.

“Nay, sons, then must I leave ye so,
But lost will be your souls, I trow.”

Nay, Father, make you merry.
Come, drawer, bring some sherry.

“ Me drink ? Old birds are not unwary—
Still less—ha—well—’tis fine canary.”

Mark how his old blood prances—
A stoup for Father Francis.

“ Your wine, my sons, is wondrous good,
And hath been long time in the wood.”

Mark how his old eye dances—
More wine for Father Francis.

“ A man, my sons—a man, I say,
Might well drink here till judgment-day.”

Now for soft words and glances—
But where is Father Francis ?

“Heed me, my sons, I pray no more,
I always sleep upon the floor.”

Alas ! for old wine’s chances,
A shutter for Father Francis !

AN ANSWER.

You ask me, wondering, why I sing,
And why my lips in laughter part ;
The ripples of my mirth all spring
From the deep sorrow at my heart.

A smile is easier than the tear
That serves to keep sad memories green,
And always through what is, I hear
The echoes of what might have been.

A BOUQUET.

I BROUGHT my love at eve a mass of flowers
That I had sought throughout the morning hours :
Brought all that I could find of bright and sweet,
And trembling laid them down before her feet.

She passed the tulip's pride, the rose's glow,
To choose a bud that scarcely dared to blow ;
And said with kindness beaming in her eyes,
"I take the flower that others will despise."

NOW AND THEN

The sea below was laughing
In ever-varying hue ;
The flowers here were quaffing
Their draught of morning dew.

The waves are grey and roaring,
That then were blue and still,
And winter's torrents pouring
Where ran the bubbling rill.

There is no sun remaining
To flush the deathly snow,
The loud wind's long complaining
Fills all the air with woe.

In place of winter's sadness,
Full summer's joy would reign,
And flood the world with gladness
Were we two one again.

A CONTINUATION.

"WHEN the locks of burnished gold,

Lady, shall to silver turn,"*

When thy cheek is wan and old,

And thine eyes no longer burn

With the brightness that was in them

On the day when first we met,

Even though I never win them,

Lady, I shall love thee yet.

* Thackeray's "Adventures of Philip."

SONG.

THERE is love for me in store
In the notes that round me ring ;
I would give them all, and more,
Once again to hear him sing.

Gently whispered in mine ear,
Loving words the hour beguile ;
Cheap I hold them : this were dear,
Once again to see him smile.

SONG.

41

Smile for smile nor sigh for sigh

Gave he, though I loved him well :

I would bid the world go by

Once to hear him say farewell.

THE DEVOUT LOVER.

It is not mine to sing the stately grace,
The great soul beaming in my lady's face ;
To write no sounding odes to me is given,
Wherein her eyes outshine the stars in heaven ;
Not mine in flowing melodies to tell
The thousand beauties that I know so well ;
Not mine to serenade her every tress,
To sit and sigh my love in idleness ;

But mine it is to follow in her train,
Do her behests in pleasure or in pain,
Burn at her altar Love's sweet frankincense,
And worship her in distant reverence.

A QUESTION.

BUT is it there the Heaven you sing ?

Shall God make whole the rents of life ?

And shall our ears no longer ring

With the old clang of toil and strife ?

Shall things be fair, but never fleet ?

Shall laughter be the voice of mirth ?

Shall Nature's face be soft, and sweet

With tender memories of earth ?

Or while our friends and lovers weep

That we have passed Death's iron gate,

Shall we be lost in endless sleep,

Nor dream of those that mourn our fate ?

STORM AND CALM.

THE waters raged but yesternight,
The wild wind raised a shrieking wail,
The clouds drove by in swift affright
Before the fury of the gale.

To-day the sea lies smooth as glass,
The storm-fiend's voice is heard no more,
The waves in quiet cadence pass,
And melt upon the peaceful shore ;

The laughing ripple of the wave
Is like the sunny flowers that grow
Upon the summit of a grave,
Yet cannot mask the death below.

The glad sea smiles to catch the light,
A smile that can caress and kill,
For yonder wave, with crest so white,
Bears a dead face that's whiter still,

LOVE SONG.

My will is gone to sleep, dear,
And only you can wake it ;
My heart is in your keep, dear,
To hold or drop and break it.

One day I hold most dear, sweet,
The day when first I met you ;
One thing to me's most clear, sweet,
I never can forget you.

LOVE SONG.

51

Daylight without your eyes, dear,

For me all brightness misses,

And most in life I prize, dear,

The memory of your kisses.

A SONG OF THE ICE.

ABOVE the calm sky seems to sleep ;
The glacier breeze blows cool and sweet ;
The blue crevasse lies wide and deep,
A second sky beneath our feet.

On every side we see the snow,
Fields of pure white instead of green,
And here and there we catch the low
Clear music of some stream unseen.

At each stroke of the sturdy axe
Ice diamonds tinkle down the slope ;
'Neath crunching heels the névé cracks,
Our feet are firm, and firm our rope.

Swiftly and surely upwards press,
The summit we shall soon attain,
And then—how short is happiness !—
The end is to come down again.

WAITING.

THERE is her house. From the trysting stile
It measures an endless half of a mile ;
Where I stand, like the sun through April showers,
I can see the glow of her garden flowers.

Which of them all is like my love ?
The fairy-like bend of the tall foxglove ?
The bright pink's blush of the earth's best blood ?
Or the delicate warmth of the rose's bud ?

She is not like the pink : not like the rose :

She is not like any one flower that grows ;

But the beauty of all that the earth can bear

Is gathered for her alone to wear.

MOUSSIRENDER RHEINWEIN.

POUR out the bright nectar,
To lay the grim spectre
That lurks in the depths underlying our mirth ;
Forget for a minute
That life has aught in it,
Save all that is fair on the face of the earth.

Outstrip melancholy,
We'll catch flying folly,

And with her away to her kingdom take wing ;

And gay songs and dances

Shall banish our fancies,

That life has a burden or love has a sting.

Our friends Care and Sorrow

May find us to-morrow ;

To-night if they seek us we'll drown them in wine,

And all of our troubles

Shall die with the bubbles

That float on the foaming life-stream of the Rhine.

DAYBREAK.

SING for the night is dying,
And through the brightening air
The gold-flecked clouds are flying
The tidings on to bear ;

Sing for the morn is breaking,
Sing for the night is done,
And all the birds are waking
To greet the rising sun.

DAYBREAK.

59

Sing for the sun has risen,
The gloom of night is past,
And we have burst our prison
And reach the day at last.

A CONQUEST.

I FOUND him openly wearing her token ;
I knew that her troth could never be broken ;
I laid my hand on the hilt of my sword,
He did the same and spoke not a word ;
I bad him confess his villany,
He smiled, and said, ' She gave it me.'
We searched for seconds, they soon were found,
They measured our swords and measured the
ground ;

To save us they would not have uttered a breath,
They were ready enough to help us to death.
We fought in the midst of a wintry wood,
Till the fair white snow was red with his blood :
But his was the victory, for, as he died,
He swore by the rood that he had not lied.

BOAT SONG.

BOAT, little boat,
A breeze on thy white sails shall soon light,
Float, lightly float,
Far away into the moonlight :
Winging thy flight,
From the noise and the jar of the world.
In a dream of delight
Shall thy glistening sails be unfurled :

Float far away,
From the glare of the sun's blinding light,
From the heat of the day,
To the cool of the slumbering night :
Float through the bay,
Though the soft ripples' infinite motion ;
Bear me away
To the tireless waves of the ocean :
Float to the deep,
To the ocean-bird's long-rolling pillows,
Ah ! Let me sleep
On a soft-tossing cradle of billows.

X. OLD COURT. TRINITY.

A GRADUATE MUSES.

THE storm and wind torment the pane,
The rain-drops make the fountain weary,
The court is wrapped in gloom again,
And all without is dark and dreary.

I light my dusky meerschaum bowl,
And bend my head on hands supported,
While in my ears the curfew's toll
Rings clear although the door is sported.

The eddyng smoke wreaths slowly rise,
In pleasure half and half dejection,
I call the past before my eyes,
And give myself to recollection.

Then through the whirling rings of smoke
I see my old friends' well-known faces
I hear their pleasant song and joke,
With them frequent the old loved places.

When shall we meet? The smoke-cloud parts,
And through the gap I see a vision,
Of joining hands and joyful hearts ;
And cups that clink in swift collision.

Yes—loves of boy and girl may wane,
But close-knit friendship will not alter ;
And we shall live to meet again,
And toast tobacco, and Sir Walter !

A SKETCH.

THE sky is blue and bright above,
The trees have donned their soft green dresses,
And prattling out its lazy love
The river takes the sun's caressss.

The air with sweet spring scents is rife,
And pleasant with the talk of thrushes,
As, glad with a new sense of life,
The year towards its noonday rushes.

Within a corner of the wood
Where the sun's might comes something fainter,
And dulled the voices of the flood,
There sit a lady and a painter.

Intent the scene's delight to trace,
He deftly plies his practised fingers,
With eyes that grow towards her face,
And most on her his labour lingers.

And while he works the day glides by,
Until with pink the hill-side flushes,
And with a half-regretful sigh,
He murmurs, flinging down his brushes,

“ The light that travels down the stream,
Or, piercing through an opening slender,
Falls through the leaves with fitful gleam—
This light my skill can catch and render.

“ But, sweet, your eyes gives out a light
That, though I strive from morn till even,
I never can reflect aright—
I paint the earth, and not the Heaven.”

LALAGE.

I COULD not keep my secret

Any longer to myself ,

I wrote it in a song-book

And laid it on a shelf.

It lay there many an idle day,

'Twas covered soon with dust ;

I graved it on my sword blade,

'Twas eaten by the rust.

I told it to the running brook,
 With many a lover's notion ;
The gay waves laughed it down the stream
 And flung it in the ocean.

I told it to the zephyr then,
 He breathed it through the morning,
The light leaves rustled in the breeze
 My fond romances scorning.

I told it to the raven sage,
 He croaked it to the starling ;
I told it to the nightingale,
 She sang it to my darling.

LA DIVE BOUTEILLE.—ANGLICE.

YOUR coldness, my beauty ; your scorn,
My innermost heartstrings have torn ;
No remedy sweeter I ask
Than is found in this delicate flask.

Its life-blood I joyously spill,
And as bumper on bumper I fill,
If I pause to remember your kisses
'Tis to find 'em less charming than this is.

This mistress is constant and true
(Which can scarcely be boasted of you)
Young love's but a fool to old wine,
So here's to the Bottle Divine !

FRENCH RHYMES.



FRENCH RHYMES.

UN PROPOS MAL A PROPOS.

“ VIENS ici, ma belle,
Accours m’embrasser ;
Qu’est-ce ? Que te fait-elle ?
Je ne puis l’aimer.

Non ! et je te jure
Que l’éternité .
Est dans le murmure
Par ta voix donné

Ce mot, jalousie,
Faut bien l'oublier ;
Près de toi ma vie
Laisse-moi passer ! ”

“ Cavalier, ” fit-elle,
“ C'est par trop poli :
Tu me trouves belle,
Et c'est bien ainsi.

La blonde Marie
Quoi !—tu l'oublierais
Mais toute la vie
Moi j'y penserais.

Dans la gâite pleine
Je verrais toujours

Un regard de haine

Menacer mes jours.

Si cela t'entraîne,

Un second amour,

A d'autres la peine,

Je te dis—Bonjour.”

LA DIVE BOUTEILLE.

Ton mépris, ta froideur,
Ont glacé tout mon cœur,
Mais avec la bouteille
Ma gaité se réveille.

Quand je verse son sang,
Qui s'écoule gaîment,
Sa chaleur me console
Et mon chagrin s'envole.

Son reflet me révèle
Un amour bien fidèle,
Que dans tous tes appas
Je ne trouverais pas.

CHANSONNETTE.

L'AMOUR fait ici-bas la vie ;

N'oublie pas

Que j'ai trouvé l'amour, ma mie,

Dans tes doux bras.

Bien d'autres vont jurer peut-être

T'aimer toujours ;

C'est dans mon cœur que tu fais naître

Les longs amours.

UN FACHEUX.

CHAQUE jour, dès l'aurore,
Je dis que je t'adore ;
Chaque soir, tout de même,
Je me dis que je t'aime.

Pour mes vœux, belle reine,
Me rendras-tu la haine ?
Ainsi soit ; tout de même,
Je dirai que je t'aime.

Si tu veux me bannir,
Je m'en irai mourir ;
Mais mourant, tout de même,
Je chant'rai que je t'aime.



